



STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
301 CENTENNIAL MALL SOUTH • PO BOX 94987 • LINCOLN, NE
68509

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting

Nebraska VR Office

Lincoln, NE

August 13, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Public notice of upcoming meetings will be available on the Department of Education website under "Master Calendar" at least 5 days prior to each meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lonnie Berger, Jerry Bryan, Michael Bursaw, Lindy Foley (via video-conference), Chris Gaspari, Gayle Hahn, Teresa Hebner (substitute for Carly Weyers), Susan Madsen, Tobias Orr, Diane Owen-Downs, Sandy Peterson, Alice Senseney, JD Simmons, Camie West

MEMBERS ABSENT: Crystal Booker, Deanna Henke, John McNally, Jonathan Moeller, Vicki Newman, David Scott, Adriana Springer, Cassidy Wall

VR STAFF PRESENT: Angela Fujan, Brigid Griffin, Ashley Hernandez, Kathy Lloyd, Mary Matusiak, Victoria Rasmussen

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:01 a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council members and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Chris Gaspari suggested the State Rehabilitation Council put together something for Mark Schultz former VR Director to congratulate him on his federal appointment. Members decided to present an SRC plaque and letter, which Chris will draft. Angela Fujan will email the letter to council members, and present the plaque and letter to Mark from the council.

No additional public comment was shared.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chris Gaspari moved and Tobias Orr seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

APPROVAL OF MAY 14, 2019 MINUTES

Lonnie Berger moved and Michael Bursaw seconded a motion to approve the May 14, 2019 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

COUNCIL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Angela Fujan shared that David Scott stepped down as SRC chair due to his new employment. Sandy Peterson, serving as current vice chair, stated she would be interested in being council chair. Angela reported with Sandy transitioning to council chair the council will need to elect a new vice chair. Michael Bursaw stated he would be willing to serve as vice chair. Angela reviewed with members the current committee chairs. Jerry Bryan stated he would be willing to serve as the Client Services Committee chair. Lonnie Berger stated he would like to serve as chair to the Employer Services Committee. Alice Senseney stated she would serve as chair to the Transition Services Committee. There were no objections to the elections.

Council members were provided copies of the SRC Council Composition and Committee Membership documents for review and asked if any edits or updates were to be added. No updates were offered. Lonnie Berger noted he finds the council composition page useful to have at the meeting to help identify members. The council composition page will be printed on the back of the agenda at future meetings.

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

Senator Outreach

Members reviewed last meeting's senator outreach suggestions that were provided by David Scott. Members asked if construction at the Capitol will be completed discussing if food would now be permitted. Members discussed the best two options for outreach is either having food available via a co-sponsor for a meeting or door knocking individually. Tobias Orr stated that holding a room meeting without a food draw is not a good option as there is no attendance. Susan Madsen shared she would be glad to sponsor if the council decided to go that route noting that the outreach event would need some media attention and social media outreach to improve outreach effectiveness. Sandy Hamm will be contacted to reach out to the Capitol in order to determine if a food room is available and can be booked for February. Members discussed utilizing success stories in outreach efforts. Sandy Peterson discussed having talking points available that she could utilize at any point for use whenever needed would be very useful. Sandy stated a small laminated card or a phone note that can be easily accessed would be great. Michael Bursaw asked if information could be broken down by county or areas served is able to be provided, stating this would be helpful to show each senator their constituents. Chris Gaspari suggested the council create an outreach committee to work on media and outreach information. Members discussed the committee would team with VR Marketing's Sarah Chapin and report back to the council at the October meeting. Chris Gaspari volunteered to chair the committee and Michael Bursaw will assist.

Business Award Nominations

Mary Matusiak reported a group from the Employer Services Committee met in August to vote on nominations. Mary shared members of the committee volunteered at the May meeting to be on the selection committee, stating those who participated included: Crystal Booker, Susan Madsen, Tobias Orr, Michael Bursaw, and Lonnie Berger. Mary reviewed the five award categories with the council: small business, large business, entrepreneurs (case closed successfully for 1 year and succeeding), champion, and a new category this year, new business partnerships. Mary shared winners were selected in all five categories. Middleton Electric from Grand Island was chosen as

the large business of the year winner and their nomination was read to the council. Mary discussed there were a lot of very strong nominations received this year. The small business recognition winner is Sehnert's Bakery & Bieroc Café in McCook, NE; the nomination was read to council members. The New Business Partnership award winner is Black Cow Fat Pig in Norfolk, NE; the nomination was shared with the council. The Entrepreneur of the Year award recipient selected is Linda "Janie" York owner of Hear Now Mobile Hearing Solutions in Omaha, NE; her nomination was shared. The Individual Champion award winner is, David Scott, his nomination and service history was shared. The award winners will be honored following the October meeting at an Award's Ceremony at the State Capitol.

2020 MEETING DATES

- February 11, 2020
- May 12, 2020
- August 11, 2020
- October 13, 2020

Gayle Hahn moved and Susan Madsen seconded the motion to approve the 2020 meeting dates as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Sandy Peterson asked council members if any feedback was brought to council members. Chris Gaspari shared the story of a neighbor that is living with disabilities and a brain injury whose VR case was closed, reporting they do not know what to do now. Jerry Bryan shared this individual can contact the Client Assistance Program and they can assist her in evaluating the case and determining next steps. Sandy Peterson shared this individual's story seems consistent with those throughout the state as in her experience at PTI, many parents are confused in regards to order of selection and waiting lists. Angela Fujan discussed that when individuals are being placed on the waiting list part of that intake is resource referral sharing, they should be given information of options they can pursue while on the waiting list. Brigid Griffin shared they have had concerns with students leaving school not having an understanding of their options, stating protocols and services are being addressed earlier and improved. No additional member feedback was shared.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were asked for feedback on the written reports provided from NSILC, ATP, NYLC and the Client Assistance Program. Jerry Bryan reviewed the two cases from the last quarter included in his written report. Jerry shared in case one several issues were able to be resolved and worked through until the point where the client ceased to communicate and no longer wanted to work with CAP. Jerry reported at that point the client hired new legal representation that then was involved in a partial hearing through his attorney in which CAP could not continue working with the client and had to close the case. VR's decision was supported in conclusion of the hearing. Jerry summarized the second case reporting it was decided the client's counselor should be changed and communication was restored, but later the client suffered a new injury and services needed to be postponed. Tobias Orr reviewed highlights from the ATP report discussing new staff hires and turnover. Tobias shared this year is ATP's 30th anniversary. Tobias shared ATP-4-All is being pushed back until February or March due to contracting changes. Teresa Hebner shared a Deaf and Hard of Hearing update. Teresa reported they will be hosting an event in partnership with CHI and logistics will be shared with council members soon. Teresa shared the Omaha office will have an opening in her position. Teresa shared that Carly Weyers will be returning from her leave of absence in September and should be attending future council meetings. No additional feedback was provided.

NEBRASKA YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Kathy Lloyd discussed her new role and work thus far coming into her position. Kathy shared she has been working hard to re-engage the youth leadership council members as well as developing reconnections with agencies and VR offices. Kathy shared the council is in need of additional youth leadership council representation for the western region of the state. Kathy reported two new council members were added to the council. Kathy shared she is working on improving communication with youth council members who do not check email regularly, she is increasing Facebook use, creating calendars and utilizing text messaging to help improve communication. Kathy discussed trainings she has been implementing to improve youth members' self-advocacy. Brigid Griffin shared they are very happy to have Kathy come into this position, noting that this summer's youth conference was a great success thanks to her.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Lindy Foley delivered the VR Director's Report via video conferencing. Lindy updated the council regarding the order of selection, reviewing the state funding increase discussed last meeting became available July 1st and 300 individuals were able to be moved off the wait list thanks to that increase. Lindy reported that the additional funds also created the opportunity to apply for additional federal funds to hopefully increase funding further; this is currently being pursued and word on that funding award will be determined by mid-September. Lindy discussed RSA, sharing former VR director, Mark Schultz, began his first day in his new position yesterday. Lindy discussed the WIOA state plan which consists of partners such as the Department of Labor, Commission for the Deaf and Hard & Hearing and others which is submitted every 4 years. The next state plan is due in March 2020 and a lot of collaborative work is being done to create this plan. Lindy shared an RFP (request for proposals) was created to develop a needs assessment of clients. Lindy shared there is a focus on the needs of students through PETS and the need to establish and improve community employment services. Lindy reported part of establishing this plan process helps evaluate services. Lindy discussed they have been engaging with partners and will update next meeting regarding goals. Lindy shared Nebraska VR is not being monitored this year with RSA but is utilizing the MTAG for self-evaluation and are looking at this as a continuing improvement program. Lindy reviewed the four categories of the MTAG, sharing the goal of VR staff is to complete all four sections by October. Lindy requested council input on a potential bi-monthly e-newsletter for individuals on the wait list who are willing to share their email address, which could include things like updates, work force tips, and potential resource options that are not individualized. Lindy stated things have not slowed down in Priority Group One's wait list. Lindy asked council members for pros and cons of this potential newsletter. Christine Gaspari discussed some individuals needing assistance accessing the document. Lindy noted the newsletter would not include any specific individualized information and individuals could choose to unsubscribe if they wished. Gayle Hahn shared she feels this would be a great resource. Chris suggested a note regarding the status of the order of selection could be added so individuals know they have not been forgotten.

SUMMER TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Brigid Griffin discussed the 18 summer programs that were created in partnership with NDE. Brigid reported there were 5 new contractors this summer. Brigid shared over 200 students were served in the summer programs. Brigid discussed she believes the programs will come in under budget discussing all the great learning opportunities including CASA, Cedars, Hastings Public Schools, Contemporary Woods and Easter Seals. Brigid shared all the offices throughout the state had more formal summer engagement with students and she is awaiting final reports. Brigid reported over the last year there have been over 800 work-based learning experiences. Brigid discussed she attended a

collaborative meeting with Kansas and provided materials for any interested council members' review. *Along the Way* guides can be accessed at:
<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/DD-Planning-Council-Resources.aspx>

OCTOBER AWARD CEREMONY

Mary Matusiak reported the Governor has been invited to the ceremony and they have not yet heard if he is able to attend, stating the time of the ceremony is tentatively set at 1pm on the 8th pending the Governor's schedule. If the plan does not change the SRC meeting will be held in the morning followed by the award ceremony set up similarly to last year. Mary noted media will be invited to the event as well. The ceremony will be held in room 1510 at the State Capitol.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Members broke into committees for discussion.

Client Services

Gayle Hahn reported the committee reviewed the Client Satisfaction Survey comparing last year's numbers to current responses. Gayle reported 72 surveys were completed this quarter and 94% of those surveyed are still employed. Also, 94% of respondents would recommend VR to friends and family. Gayle shared VR staff can now check results in real time.

Employer Services

Lonnie Berger shared the committee discussed Project SEARCH restarting this year, as well as discussing its Steering Committee and Business Advisory Council. Lonnie reported the committee discussed improvements that could be made to the Business Advisory Council by building awareness and meeting on a more regular basis.

Transition Services

Alice Senseney reported the committee discussed VR trainings and preparing for the upcoming school year including an updated consent form for students. Alice reviewed additional PETS form updates and improvements reviewed by the committee. FEAT is going great. Kansas collaboration meeting was held regarding transition services and discussed the Kansas Leadership Academy as an option for NYLC members. Life span frameworks utilized in Kansas could be utilized in Nebraska bringing inclusive language and improvements. Sandy Peterson with PTI has been holding webinars and will begin doing Podcasts with the first podcast being done with Deb Wragge of the ASD network discussing the state conference and why parents may want to attend. Brigid is joining the SEAC as the VR representative. NDE is concerned teachers have not been using transition assessments so have trained 2 individuals from each ESU to provide transition assessment training in their local districts.

NEXT MEETING

October 8, 2019 – Nebraska State Capitol, Room 1510, Lincoln, NE

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:26pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Schultz recognition – Chris Gaspari letter, Angela Fujan plaque
- Capitol food room reservation for February Outreach – Angela Fujan/Sandy Hamm
- Media Outreach Committee – Chris Gaspari/Sarah Chapin
- NCSRC teleconference login information